

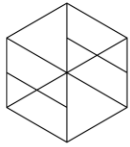
The
Heritage
Practice

10 Bloomsbury Way, London WC1A 2SL
+44 (0)20 3871 2951
www.theheritagepractice.com
info@theheritagepractice.com

Pre-application Heritage Appraisal Addendum
Nos. 3-5 Bedford Row, London, WC1R 4BU

June 2024





1 Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Appraisal Addendum, prepared by The Heritage Practice, addresses proposed revisions to the planning permission and listed building consent for 3-5 Bedford Row, London WC1 granted in May 2023 (Application Nos. 2022/4518/P and 2022/4750/L) which has also been amended by application dated 26 June 2024 (2023/3445/P & 2023/3447/L).

1.2 This statement should be read alongside the HUT Architects proposed drawings;

- P0011 rev G
- P0013-15 rev H
- P0031 rev H
- P0032 rev K
- P0033 rev D
- P0034 rev D
- P0035 rev E

1.3 The need for these amendments arises from site constraints during the course of construction.

1.4 A summary of the changes includes:

- Pelmet detail reinstated on the front elevation due to position of existing concrete downstand beam (P0031);
- Painted timber cladding to conceal existing concrete downstand beam above the entrance to Jockeys Field elevation (P0032);
- Window to fire escape staircases removed and infilled with brickwork to match existing 'blind window' detail (P0011; P0033 and P0035);
- Changes to new approved rooflights at lower ground floor level and third floor level (P0011; P0013 and P0015);
- Hit and miss brickwork within the 3rd floor windows on the northern closet wing to be replaced with louvres (P0034)
- Installation of new rooflight to newly constructed top floor (P0014 and P0015);

2 Significance Summary

2.1 3-5 Bedford Row is part of a terrace of seven Grade II listed buildings (Nos. 1-7) and was first listed in October 1951, built in 1717-18. However, Nos. 3-5 were rebuilt in the 1960s as a purpose-built single-use office building.

2.2 The exterior facades retain some Georgian character but with modern substitutions that compromise authenticity and integrity.

2.3 The rear facade lacks the distinctive rhythm of the full-height closet wings.

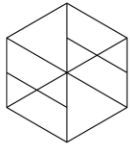
2.4 Modern office extensions behind the front facades result in no special architectural interest.

2.5 The interiors of Nos. 3-5 were entirely lost in the 1960s rebuild, with a single core design and false ceilings.

2.6 No retained historic fabric was found based on detailed site inspection.

2.7 The building has limited historical or architectural interest, with some contribution to the streetscape along Bedford Row. first listed in October 1951 as a group of Georgian houses (Nos. 1-7) built 1717-18.

2.8 However, within the group, Nos. 3-5 were rebuilt in the 1960s, with evidence suggesting the complete demolition and redevelopment of the site, to provide a purpose built single use office building.



3 Assessment

3.1 The primary consideration is the impact of changes on the conservation area and the listed terrace group's setting.

External Alterations

Bedford Row Façade

3.2 One change is proposed to the principal elevations on Bedford Row. The original consent allowed for the removal of the pelmets at the head of the first and second floor windows.

3.3 However, it has subsequently been discovered that an unknown consequence of the 1960s facsimile rebuild is the concrete structure cutting across the window heads at these levels. The proposed non-material amendment therefore seeks to retain a timber fillet detail above the head of the windows (figures 1-3).

3.4 The proposed change would maintain the appearance of the building from the existing (pre-approved scenario) and therefore would preserve or 'do no harm' from situation prior to works commencing on site. Arguably the subtle fillet detail would be an enhancement from the pelmet detail and go some way to improving the appearance.

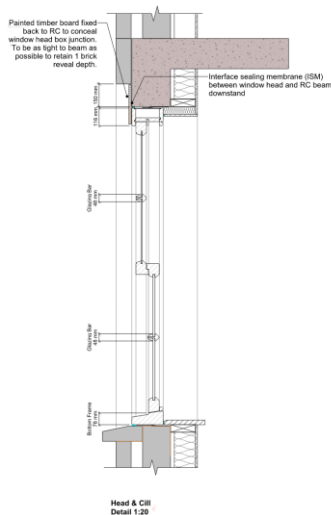
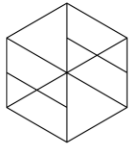


Figure 1:
Proposed
fillet detail
to first and
second
floor front
windows



Figure 2 & 3: Existing concrete frame restricting the



Jockeys Field Façade

3.5 Similarly, an existing concrete beam is present below the bressummer of the large gate to the rear façade on Jockeys Field. The existing beam needs to be retained and therefore requires the inclusion of a timber fillet above the new timber gates. This is likely to result in an imperceptible change to the external appearance of the new timber gates. This would have no material impact on the character and appearance of the building or conservation area.

Internal Elevations

3.5 A first floor half landing window within the rear façade of Jockey's Field building will be largely concealed by approved plant equipment. This creates poor quality outlook. The window only serves a secondary staircase.

3.6 The window affected, was be replaced as part of the approved scheme. The proposal would block the window with matching brickwork. The window is not visible from the public realm and largely concealed from view from neighbouring buildings, partially by the approved plant but also the approved two storey central infill development.



Figure 3: Ariel view showing position of the window to be blocked on the rear façade of the 1960s Jockey field building (window shown in pink)



Figure 4: Approved rear elevation of Jockeys Field façade showing the window to be blocked (shown in pink) largely concealed behind the approved plant and set within the two storey courtyard lightwell.

Closet wings

3.7 To the rear façade of the Bedford Row there are non-material changes to the existing blank windows within the new closet wings.

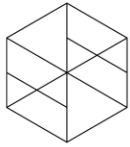
3.8 The hit and miss brickwork within the 3rd floor blank windows to the southern closet wing (closest to Sandland Street) would be replaced with standard brickwork. This would match the existing blank windows on the façade of the closet wing below. These blank windows are likely to be visible from the public realm. The change would provide a minor enhancement by creating greater continuity to the closet wing.

3.9 The hit and miss brickwork within the 3rd floor blank windows to the northern closet wing will be replaced with louvres within same opening to provide ventilation for plant room. These will be colour match the brick work with similar fine grain horizontal regularity of the brick bond. The change would not be visible from the public realm or from the listed building on Bedford Row.

Rooflights.

3.10 The other changes relate to inserting or omitting of approved rooflights

3.11 A rooflight within the ground floor infill to the north courtyard is to be omitted. This will



have no material impact on the special character of the building.

3.12 The new approved glazed roof between the closet wings will be refined to contain two rooflights rather than patent glazing. Again, this will have no material impact on the special character of the building.

3.13 A flush rooflight would be installed within the roof accommodation at fourth floor level. This would be on the rear roof slope but maybe visible in glimpsed views from within Gray's Inn Gardens. The rooflight would include a central mullion to the follow the pattern / grain of the approved standing seam roof profile. The rooflight would be consistent with other similar rooflight/access hatches found on the existing adjoining roofs on Bedford Row (figure 4)

3.14 In our view the rooflight would correspond to the existing adjoining historic roofscape found along Bedford Row terrace (figure 5) which includes a variety of rooflights and hatches. None of these harm the character of the roofs but instead are seen as a typical and established but unobtrusive roofscape feature.

Conclusions

3.15 The main issues for consideration area the effect of the proposed changes would have on the listed terrace group and the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.

3.16 The proposed works consider the site's value and significance, with minimal changes in low-significance areas not visible from the public realm. The front façade to Bedford Row is clearly of the highest significance and the proposed change here would preserve its special character and appearance.

3.17 The proposed change to window openings and rooflights with the main body of the building would be largely imperceivable. The only change affecting existing 1960s fabric would be the loss of the rear window to the Jockeys Field building. This is already obscured by plant.

3.18 Collectively the proposed changes preserve as well enhance the sites special characteristics and listed building features in a manner which doesn't reduce the merits of the approved scheme.



Figure 5: Ariel view of the existing adjoining roofscape on the east side of Bedford Row. The images shows the plethora of rooflights and hatches on the historic roofs. (the site is on the far left of the image)